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***Betrayal of Trust*, by J. A. Jance, William Morrow, 2011**

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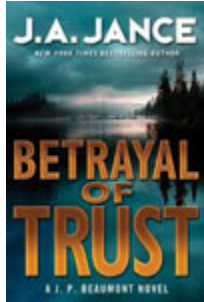
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Recommended Readings



Betrayal of Trust

by J. A. Jance, William Morrow, 2011

Reviewed by Larry Riggs

I am never sure that J. A. Jance is really a good writer, but she must be a very good storyteller. I say that because I have read all of her long list of novels, and I have finished every one of them. This distinguishes her from a number of very good writers, whose books I am often unable to finish. Jance's grammatical lapses and her occasional descents into cliché do not, ultimately, keep me from enjoying her stories.

This latest entry in the J. P. Beaumont series—one of Jance's 4 active series—is a good read. Beaumont, a recovering alcoholic and member of Washington State's special homicide investigation team, joins his new wife and homicide team member, Mel Soames, in a delicate investigative adventure. A "snuff film" video has appeared on the cell phone of the Washington governor's 15-year-old step-grandson, making the boy the principal suspect in a murder. The investigation leads Beaumont and Soames from the governor's mansion through the hardscrabble, dying logging towns east of the Cascades to a shelter house for troubled teens. A volatile mix of arrogant, affluent kids and their contemporaries from poor and sometimes abusive working class families lies near the heart of the mystery. Jance's analysis of her characters' motives is, as usual, fairly simple but quite plausible. I recommend the book.

- Larry Riggs is Professor of French at Butler University.